



# STATE SENATOR BRENT WALTZ

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## Fellow Taxpayers:

The reason this important mailing has been reduced in size is to save costs. Additional information can be seen online at [www.in.gov/Senator.Waltz](http://www.in.gov/Senator.Waltz).

B.W.

[WWW.IN.GOV/SENATOR.WALTZ](http://WWW.IN.GOV/SENATOR.WALTZ)

## PROPERTY TAX CAPS

Hoosier voters in November's general election will determine if permanent caps on property tax rates will be added to Indiana's Constitution.

Lawmakers this session gave final approval to a resolution that would constitutionally cap property tax rates at 1 percent for owner-occupied homes, 2 percent for other residential and agricultural properties and 3 percent for businesses.

This action sets the stage to make these 1-2-3 caps part of the constitution.



In the immediate aftermath of the 2007 property tax crisis, both chambers passed the property tax caps amendment in 2008.

Thanks to the 2010 approval, the amendment has now been passed by two separately-elected sessions of the General Assembly and can go before voters on Nov. 2.

Approval of this resolution proves lawmakers are once again siding with taxpayers and not tax spenders.

## HEALTH CARE

This session, I crafted a resolution in an attempt to help protect Hoosier taxpayers from any federal mandate requiring all citizens to purchase health-care coverage.

Unfortunately, Senate Concurrent Resolution 10 did not receive a hearing in the Indiana House of Representatives after passing the Indiana Senate.

I recognize that health care is a personal decision, one that government should not decide.

This resolution would have urged the Indiana General Assembly to protect Hoosiers' rights to purchase private health care coverage of their choice and not be forced to purchase federally mandated health care services or face fines.



I will be closely following the rollout of the newly passed federal legislation, and will continue to be a voice against unwanted government intrusion in Hoosiers' lives.



# SEN. BRENT WALTZ

SERVING SENATE DISTRICT 36 TAXPAYERS



## Dear Friends,

The 2010 Indiana General Assembly recently finished its legislative session. Although much was accomplished, there is no question that life remains difficult for far too many Hoosiers. I've had the privilege of listening to many citizens as to what they expect from state government during these challenging times. By far, the most common response was to spend less time relying on study committees and decisively act on critical issues facing Indiana. Although it is important to review and analyze the complex aspects of many legislative matters, there is no question that we must act quickly to protect Hoosiers and vital government institutions – such as our public schools – from the worst of this terrible economic downturn.

I am an optimist, and I am confident that the best days for Indiana and the United States are ahead of us. We seem to have stabilized our unemployment rate, albeit at an unacceptably high 9.7 percent. The darkest days may already be behind us, but state and local governments will continue to be under severe budget stress for the foreseeable future. Just as Hoosiers are learning to adjust to these economic realities, so too must all levels of government. Several Indiana departments trimmed their budgets by more than 20 percent and we will continue to look for savings that do not compromise vital government services.

Our planning and foresight has spared Indiana from the failures of many other states. While most states are slashing money for road construction and maintenance, the \$3.8 billion Indiana received for leasing its northern toll road in 2006 guarantees that our road projects will proceed as scheduled for many years. As of the middle of March, 40 states had raised taxes on their citizens

during this recession. Indiana is not one of them. Raising taxes on people struggling during these difficult times is irresponsible and will delay economic recovery. This year the General Assembly delayed for 12 months the implementation of unemployment insurance premium increases in order to encourage businesses to hire and retain workers in hopes of reducing Indiana's unemployment rate. Indiana companies would have otherwise been forced to pay \$400 million in additional premiums that likely would have resulted in increased layoffs and slower rehiring.

Thank you for the privilege of serving you.

*Brent Waltz*

Brent Waltz

Senator,

State of Indiana



**An Eagle Scout himself, Sen. Brent Waltz visits with scouts from pack 92 in Perry Township as they celebrate Scouting's 100th Anniversary.**

## ETHICS REFORMS

Lawmakers passed an ethics reform package aimed at improving transparency in government and providing greater accountability over state leaders.

House Enrolled Act 1001 creates a one-year cooling off period before a retired legislator could become a lobbyist and requires uniform reporting by all lobbyists. The measure further reduces the threshold for reported one-time lobbyist expenses from \$100 to \$50 a

day and drops the annual total from \$500 to \$250.

Reforms include expanding registration and reporting requirements for legislative liaisons of state agencies and universities. The law prohibits statewide officeholders, other than the governor, from appearing or using their name in advertisements funded with state-appropriated dollars, unless approved by a budgetary oversight committee.

## EDUCATION

This session, lawmakers provided schools more financial flexibility and local control.

Under House Enrolled Act 1367, schools can claim up to 5 percent of funding normally dedicated to capital projects and use it for instructional purposes. Schools agreeing to pay freezes for staff, excluding those for years of experience and new degrees, can use up to 10 percent. By allowing access to these re-

sources, money will be available to help schools prevent teacher layoffs and preserve instructional programs.

To avoid additional software costs, Senate Enrolled Act 309 gives local schools the option to continue budgeting on the calendar year or change to the state's fiscal year, July 1 – June 30.

HEA 1367 also requires a new statewide plan to improve reading performance among grade schoolers.